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Dated: November 22, 2006 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(Michelle Tow)

Docket No.: 322732000401  
(PATENT)

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re Patent Application of:  
Yoichi TAKAHAMA et al.

Confirmation No.: 2837

Art Unit: 1648

Application No.: 10/028,172

Examiner: Bao Qun Li, M.D.

Filed: December 21, 2001

For: DIAGNOSTIC REAGENT FOR HEPATITIS C  
VIRUS INFECTION

MS RCE  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450  
Dear Sir:

**RCE RESPONSE AND AMENDMENT**

This is in response to the final Office Action dated September 5, 2006 ("the OA"), for which a response is initially due on December 5, 2006. Accordingly, this RCE response is timely filed. Reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims, as amended, in light of the remarks presented herein are respectfully requested.

This response is accompanied by a request for continued examination (RCE) under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114. Thus, the finality of the outstanding final office action will be withdrawn and Applicants are entitled to have this submission entered and considered on the merits. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 3 of this paper.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin on page 7 of this paper.

11/27/2006 RMEBRAHT 00000026 031952 10028172

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The following documents are enclosed herewith:

- Transmittal letter and request for continued examination (RCE) under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114,
- Fee transmittal (plus duplicate for fee processing),
- Terminal Disclaimer,
- Supplemental IDS,
- PTO Form SB/08a/b (in duplicate) and 2 foreign references;
- Postcard.